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STATE DOCUMENTS

Biennial Report

of The

Adjutant General

for The

Fiscal Years Ending November 30,

1904

"INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING COMPANY, HELENA, MONTANA."



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Biennial Report of the Adjutant General.

To His Excellency,
J. K. TOOLE,
Governor and Commander-in-Chief.

Sir:—

I have the honor to submit the following report for the two fiscal years ending November 30th, 1904.

On the date of this report the strength of the National Guard of Montana is as follows: Commissioned officers, thirty-eight; enlisted men, five hundred and thirty-nine; total, five hundred and seventy-seven.

The organization remains in force practically the same as it was November 30th, 1902, to-wit:: One light battery of artillery and seven companies of infantry. The infantry companies have been divided into two battalions; one battalion with four companies, and one battalion with three companies. The National Guard of Montana was duly organized into the Second Regiment of Infantry on December 1st, 1903 and the following field officers were duly elected, viz.:

Colonel—A. F. Bray.

Lieutenant-Colonel—Alexander Wessitsh.

Major—Geo. W. Reif.

Major—M. J. Walsh.

EQUIPMENT.

During the last two years the amount of equipment issued the military forces has been materially increased. The issues of military stores and supplies, composing this increase consists of fifty magazine rifles—calibre 30—ro each company of infantry, with the accompanying bayonets, bayonet scabbards and web belts.

From the quartermaster's department a complete outfit has been received for all the various organizations, of tentage—both wall and shelter tents—blouses, trousers, hats and leggings.

A sufficient amount of tentage has been secured to put all of the troops of the State under canvas at one time, giving to each organization the full regulation allowance of tentage.

The blanket roll has been substituted for the knapsack; new improved haversacks have replaced the old style; each organization has been given a field oven; the prescribed number of field desks have been issued, together with picks, axes, shovels, canteens, meat cans, tin cups, knives, forks and spoons. In brief, in the matter of equipment, the National Guard of Montana is now, with the exceptions of a medical outfit, and wagons, mules or horses, completely equipped to take the field for any service at any time.

Under an Act of Congress dated January 21st, 1903, making appropriations to provide arms and equipment for the militia, the State of Montana was, during the year 1903, entitled to receive arms and equipment to the value of six thousand three and seventy-two and fifty-three hundredths dollars. At the annual inspection this year from the report of Colonel Duncan, Inspector General, together with Major Torrey (24th Infantry, U. S. A.) requisition was made, and received at the arsenal at Helena, November 27th, 1903: 152 magazine rifles—caliber 30—together with 452 bayonet scabbards; 452 cartridge belts—caliber 30—; 152 gun slings; 152 S. & M. covers; 152 small arms oilers; 30 screw drivers, all of the value of three thousand four hundred and sixty-nine and twenty one-hundredths dollars.

Montana's allotment during the year 1904 was entitled to receive arms and equipment to the value of five thousand nine hundred and eighty-four and thirty one-hundredths dollars.

At and during this inspection, which was made by Major Z. W. Torrey (24th Infantry), together with Colonel A. F. Bray and the Adjutant General of the National Guard of Montana, acting as State Inspector, it was decided to first order, by requisition, full and entire equipment of tentage, field ovens and cooking utensils, which were received at the Helena arsenal during the months of August and September,

amounting in all to four thousand twenty-three and ninety-four one-hundredths dollars.

The balance of this year's allotment will be taken up in ordering much needed clothing, consisting of campaign hats, blouses, trousers, leggings, company books, Berlin gloves and chevrons.

It will be seen that the Montana Guard still has, this year, a balance of one thousand nine hundred and sixty and thirty-seven one-hundredths dollars with the United States Government. This balance is needed to purchase additional clothing in order to have the Guard in shape at the next annual inspection, in April, 1905.

ANNUAL ENCAMPMENT.

Section 18 of the Military Code (Statutes 1897) provides for an annual encampment of the National Guard at the Military Reservation (Old Fort Eellis). There are no funds available for this purpose, and consequently there have been no encampments from 1897 down to the present time. Both officers and men, who serve without pay, are all exceedingly anxious to hold an encampment, and nothing could be done that would make the Guard more efficient, and encourage them to take more interest in the advancement and upbuilding of the same than an encampment.

Early in June last, this matter of an encampment was strongly urged in a letter from this office to the Military Secretary—United States Army—and asked if funds could be had from the Government under the act of January 21st, 1903, to defray the expenses of an encampment, or to go out and march and camp near the troops from Forts Harrison and Missoula. To this the Military Secretary answered that "the expenses of the organized militia of Montana can only be met from the State's allotment under Section 1661, R. S., under the provisions of Section 14 of said act." As Montana's allotment was only five thousand nine hundred and eighty four and thirty-one one-hundredths dollars, and the equipment ordered amounted to four thousand twenty-three

and ninety-four one-hundredths dollars, there was no money left for an encampment.

The fencing inclosing the Military Reservation had to be repaired the past season, in order to protect the title to the same from the United States Government. The parade grounds have been ploughed and sown in grass, to have the same ready in the event of holding an encampment.

The buildings at old Fort Ellis have gone to ruin to such an extent that they are almost worthless to the Guard.

The suit over the water right to the Reservation has recently been decided against the Guard by the Supreme Court of Montana, which is a serious loss.

The grounds and delapidated buildings have for the past four years been in charge of Sergeant A. C. Harding, the custodian, who serves without remuneration, except the right to raise a small crop (without water) and to pasture the land.

INSPECTION.

Section 35, Military Code, Statutes of 1897, provides for annual inspection between the first day of April and the 30th day of May of each year, of each organization of the National Guard. And if each company is fully up to the required standard of numbers, discipline and efficiency, the same shall be reported to the State Board of Examiners by the Adjutant General, and the Board must allow each company the sum of four hundred dollars; and to each troop or battery five hundred and fifty dollars. This was done in both 1903 and 1904.

Each company in the Guard received the following amounts:

Battery A, Helena	\$ 550.00
Company A, Bozeman	400.00
Company B, Butte	400.00
Company C, Big Timber	400.00
Company D, Red Lodge	400.00
Company E, Livingston	400.00

Company F, Dillon	400.00
Company H, Kalispell	400.00
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Total	\$3,350.00

STATEMENT.

The expenditures from the National Guard fund for two years are as follows:

1903.

Annual Appropriation	\$5,000.00	
Annual Appropriation	800.00	
Special Appropriation	1,200.00	
	<hr/>	\$7,000.00
Expenditures	\$4,041.54	
Expenditures	1,200.00	
	<hr/>	5,241.54
		<hr/>
Balance		\$1,758.46

1904.

Annual Appropriation	\$5,000.00	
Annual Appropriation	800.00	
Special Appropriation	1,200.00	
	<hr/>	\$7,000.00
Expenditures	\$4,455.44	
Expenditures	1,200.00	
	<hr/>	5,655.44
		<hr/>
Balance		\$1,344.56

RIFLE PRACTICE.

In the matter of target practice there has been very considerable improvement with nearly all the companies. There are now many excellent marksmen in all the companies, and all have good target ranges, and are manifesting great interest in practicing.

The State trophy was won last year in a competition shoot by Company A of Bozeman, and this year by Battery A of Helena, most of the companies sending good teams to compete for the trophy. The companies are well supplied with ammunition.

REGIMENTAL BAND AT RED LODGE.

The Regiment now has a most excellent Band, composed of twenty musicians. This Band is made up of all enlisted men who are Finlanders; and it is known as the "Finn Band."

PROPERTY AT VIRGINIA CITY.

This property consists of old muskets, bayonets, cartridge boxes, etc., that were sent to Virginia shortly after the Civil War, and has, since the time of its arrival, been stored in the arsenal there.

The building in which it has been stored is in a dilapidated condition and from time to time has doubtless been entered and some of the property taken out by parties unknown.

There is nothing among the articles there stored that is of any value to the National Guard, everything being out of date.

This property originally belonged to the United States Government and the Territory of Montana was responsible for the same; but the State is no longer responsible to the United States Government for any part of it and is at liberty to make such disposal thereof as it may see fit.

In October, 1902, this property was all listed, boxed and stored in the basement of the arsenal at Virginia City, and remains there to be disposed of in some manner.

Should the proper authority be given to the Governor, this property can be sold and a small sum realized for the State. A list of the property follows:

The following is a list of property in the arsenal in Virginia City, Montana, October 30th, 1902:

- 600 muskets and bayonets (cased).
- 200 extra bayonets.
- 424,000 rounds of musket ammunition.
- 1,500 waist belts and plates.
- 1,250 cartridge box belts and plates.
- 2,400 bayonet scabbards.

- 1,865 cartridge boxes and plates.
- 1,000 gun slings, black.
- 1,000 cap pouches and picks.
- 1 full set of harness, wheel.
- 2 boxes sundry pieces of harness.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Now that Congress and the War Department are determined to equip and put the National Guard on the same footing as the Regular Army, and to increase the efficiency of the militia of the several states, I would most earnestly recommend:

An application be made to the War Department for the detail of a United States army officer for purposes of instruction.

An encampment should by all means be held at Old Fort Ellis.

There should be at least five more companies of Infantry to make three full battalions, and thus complete the organization of the regiment.

Would recommend the building of a small, inexpensive dwelling to cost one thousand dollars for the custodian of the Military Reservation at Old Fort Ellis.

To mobilize the Guard and hold the much desired encampment; and to cover the absolutely necessary expenses, it will require twenty thousand dollars per year.

I would strongly urge that Battery A, Light Artillery, be supplied with two Machine Guns—caliber 30—and that this company be converted into an Infantry company for the reason that the Battery guns are all obsolete. It is believed that if the organization is to be held together, it will be necessary to make the conversion. The officers and men of this Battery are men of character, zeal and efficiency. It is not believed to be good policy to maintain the Battery. At present the organization is not effective as a Battery, and

consequently of no benefit to the State. It has two Gatling guns—caliber 45—that could be used, if needed, and to this extent could render effective service.

Very respectfully submitted,

SHIRLEY C. ASHBY,

Adjutant General.

